

# A LAWLESS PROVIDENCE

WHEN "Snake" Dempsey got back from Joliet he went, naturally and in full confidence, to the downtown saloon of "Humpty Dump," alderman, philanthropist and all-round good Indian.

"I want a job, honest, Humpty," said Dempsey, "and I want it quick. I've quit the peer, and it's me for honest toll. I'm goin' to stay in the ward, if you'll let me, and I want to get away good."

"All right," quoth the icy alderman. "Go over there in the corner with this aquarium and wait 'n' see."

And the proprietor handed the ex-convict a glass of beer that would drown a house cat. Dempsey, famished and tired, went into his corner with a bunch of free lunch in one hand and the globe of suds in the other.

Pretty soon a fat, flourishing-looking man came in, and, having unfurled a wad of bank notes on the bar, said: "Humpty, gimme a whiff! Give ev'body a whiff! Come on, boys, an' have on 'em!"

And the hangers-on, the cab drivers loafing in the place, the policeman and even the pale faced man at the cigar stand, came on to have one with the generous visitor.

When the drinks were done, Humpty Dump, the proprietor, said:

"No, Mr. Dempsey, we shut up right now! You couldn't buy another drink for \$1,000. You know the law? You're had the last one tonight. I'm an alderman, an' a law-abiding citizen, an' you can't get no more."

Mr. Dailey, being rich and eminent and, incidentally, very drunk, sputtered:

"Thought you was m' friend, Humpty? Thish ain't no way t' do me! I want a drink, an' I want it had, see?" But Humpty didn't see. On the contrary, he got out the muslin covers and told his cigar man to count the cash. Then Dailey turned to the door, and the host, peeking into the corner where "Snake" Dempsey sat, beckoned the ex-convict to the bar.

"See old man Dailey?" asked the proprietor, indicating the last customer.

"Sure I seen him. Didn't I have a drink on him?"

"Now, see here, 'Snake.' His buggy is out there in the street, an' he oughta go home. But he'll git skinned fore he ever registers 'f someb'dy don't go with him. He's got a roll big enough t' choke a dog, an' I want you—-you, d'ye hear—to see him home. Will you do it?"

"I'll see him home fur fair, Humpty, an' two d' you worry no more."

So "Snake" Dempsey buttoned up his ragged packet and went out to help Mr. Dailey into the buggy. Then he got in himself, but the horse had hardly started when Dailey lurched over and said:

"Hi, there, pardner, le's go down t' the Galloway an' git another drink."

As Dempsey was quite sober and had no intention of interfering with the personal freedom of his temporary charge, he made no objection, and in a few minutes the buggy grated up against the curbstone outside the Galloway hotel. Mr. Dailey, assisted by the faithful "Snake" Dempsey, stumbled into the lobby, and there, just as he feared, Dempsey saw a very radiant, confident woman in a sealskin cloak hail his helpless charge.

"Here's where I'm to git in me fine work," thought Dempsey.

"Mr. Dailey," rasped the stout woman in the sealskin, "where have you been for two days?"

"Been? I've been ev'where. I'm just in f'm Singapore; I'm goin' to Ceylon on the evenin' express. I—"

"You're going home with me," chorled the woman. And then "Snake" Dempsey, conscious of his responsibility, butted in like this:

"Home wit' you, miss? Not on yer life! I'm takin' Mr. Dailey home."

"I won't permit no adventure business in our'n. I got instructions to take him to his own house, an' it's him to his bed 'r you got to show me."

The befuddled Dailey looked from the woman to Dempsey and back again, and then without a moment's warning he howled:

"Ye've insulted Mrs. Dailey! Wow, ye blackguard, take that!" And then he let drive a blow that caught his guardian in the near eye and sent him down, sprawling. Dempsey got up and went for the door like the salvage corps going for a loop fire. When he was outside he saw Mr. Dailey and the woman come out of the doorway of the hotel and enter the buggy.

In a moment the woman had the reins and the vehicle was bowling swiftly westward. At last it stopped in front of a pretentious home, and the couple in the buggy climbed out.

But "Snake" Dempsey was on the sidewalk to help them alight. Dailey, more sober now, stared into his face and said:

"Where th' divvil did you come from?"

"Your eye is black! Isn't wan enough f'r you?"



The Jailbird Walked Four Miles Back to the Saloon.

eying his man. "Did yez see Mister Dailey home safe?"

"I did," said Dempsey, with his feet on the stove fender.

"An' what'd he give yez?"

"He give me th' shiners—two of 'em—that's all."

"Thin here's five for yez, an' yez can stay all night," said Humpty.

And the incident closed—John T. Raftery in Chicago Record-Herald.

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"Wan is enough, with wan t' spare," said "Snake," but when Dailey hit him he just rolled over in the snow and then got up. To the policeman who came up as the man and woman struggled in at the front door, the ex-convict said:

"Is this where Mister Dailey lives?"

"It is," said the bobby. "An' is he married?"

"He is," said the officer, whirling his club. And then the jail-bird walked four miles, all the way back to Humpty Dump's saloon in the loop.

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